6/23/70

Dear Moo,

When I phoned you earlier today, it was because I was drawing to the end of my complaint in an action I am about to file to obtain the withheld Ferrie documents. You may recall I meantioned this to you some time ago, I suppose for the last time about two months ago. Some of my delay in filing it is from the apparently futile hope that, once you gave your word, you would keep or be permitted to keep it.

There is no selfish purpose my having this promised information could serve. Nor do I pretend I require it for this action, thoough I admit for use as part of it, it could be quite valuable - even the existence of it could well serve such ends. I plan no writing to which it could be essential, though examination might persuade otherwise.

Should I succeed in this Ferrie suit and should there be any personal benefit for anyone, need I say that this could be only for you people? If it produces anything like what my successful efforts (there to date have been no others!) have yielded, there is reason to expect worthwhile results. What better reasons are there for a total lack of the most minimal cooperation?

From time to time I have thought of what you finally agreed to get and send, of your failure to do it, and of your silence. And I've thought also of your protestations of deep feeling about this, of your sincerity. Can I do more than wonder when I compare this with the record? Or less?

New Orleans is, in my experience, sui generis. I suppose I am a bit too square to understand some of its ways and standards. Or, as Bringuier says, perhaps too old. However, I cannot but confess disappointment that you would ask and get so much help at such great cost and, in return, would not even make it possible to help you more; neither keep your word nor tell me you would not. Although I recognize you lack complete freedom, I also know you do not lack access to a phone or to a postage stamp.

What is in the complaint, nonetheless, cannot hurt you, makes a record that should be helpful to you, amounts to a kind of defense of you, and failure cannot in any way adversely effect you. What is not in the complaint and may yet be in the proceeding might have done you more good. It is not there to begin with, however, because of your silence.

My record, to date, is three out of three, which is not too bad, considering that I have tackledonly the scrubs, the Department of Justice. After what happened in the first case, the next two were settled promptly, one in response to the filing of the requisite forms, the other the day before the hearing, not on my initiative. Aside from these, there are now other cases where the threat of action has produced what I sought, what was not in the Archives. As time goes on, however, I anticipate that the club to the mule's head will get more than attention. Perhaps the reaction will be on this one. If not, then perhaps the next, which I expect to draft tomorrow. If that doesn't, and the only way either won't will be if what I seek is produced, it is only a question of time before we reach one that will be taken to court. It is possible this one will also be that one. We'll know soon enough. If it is, the record I will be taking there is a good one, I think a pretty solid one, and it may contain a few surprises besides what is unwelcome in the complaint. You and I both know it could have contained a few more surprizes.

There will be more problems than I need, for Bud is too overloaded, partly because of some rather unexpectable (to everyone but me, for it is something I worked on for a year with that in mind) extra work he now has, without even the prospect of the return of his own costs. In some, perhaps all the cases, I'll have to be my own lawyer. This in itself is more handicap than a reasonable man would hope to survive, is it not?

However, if there is no other way, then it will be this way. The alternative is abdication, of which there has already been too much. By too many, who call it something else.

Meanwhile, twixt and tween, we continue to develop odds and ends of New Orleans and New Orleans related items. I will not be bothering you with them because it would seem to serve no useful purpose.

I do not have to tell you I am not long on diplomacy when I feel things or when I am hurt. So I mince no words in telling you that your failure to do this simple thing you finally agreed to do after delaying it too long, your failure to keep your word on the personal level, do disappoint me. I would feel I had been less than honest with youand with myself if I did not so tell you with these few moments when I am too tired to work on other things.

I have no strong, passionate feelings about it, as what for me is a rather moderate expression should tell you. Possibly from long experience I had a subconscious understanding it inevitably would be this way, as it always has been. It is no more than I call it, disappointment, in you people generally and in you personally.

Nonetheless, I wish none of you other than well. With the optimism I have not lost, I look forward to the day you (all) learn that elsewhere in the world streets do sometimes run two ways.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

Paul, Gary, Mary